

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

RECEIVED

2009 FEB 11 A 9:21

MARI CHRISTOPHER

Complainant,

vs.

HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC.)

Respondent.

DIV. OF CONSUMER ADVOCACY
DEPT. OF COMMERCE AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE OF HAWAII

DOCKET NO. 2009-0004

ORDER DIRECTING RESPONDENT TO FILE
AN ANSWER TO COMPLAINANT'S FORMAL COMPLAINT

PUBLIC UTILITIES
COMMISSION

2009 FEB 10 A 8:05

FILED

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

MARI CHRISTOPHER)	
)	
Complainant,)	Docket No. 2009-0004
)	
vs.)	
)	
HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC.))	
)	
Respondent.)	
_____)	

ORDER DIRECTING RESPONDENT TO FILE
AN ANSWER TO COMPLAINANT'S FORMAL COMPLAINT

By this Order, the commission directs Respondent HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC. ("HELCO") to file an answer to the formal complaint filed by Complainant MARI CHRISTOPHER ("Complainant"), attached as Exhibit A, within twenty (20) days after the date of service of this order.

I.

Formal Complaint

On January 9, 2009, Complainant filed a formal complaint ("Complaint") with the commission against HELCO alleging:

This formal complaint is made by Mari Christopher, against [HELCO] for:

1. Denial of adjustment to zero/reimburse/credit, of charges from August 17, 2008 to September 25, 2008 [] on HELCO account #9700-3645-0188, 16-1471 Road One, Hawaiian Acres, #P30L.

2. Absence of neutral party calibration opportunities for HELCO operating equipment. There has not been fair representation for consumers for equipment failure evaluation.

.

The relief desired is to have the [commission]:

1. Order HELCO to adjust to zero, reimburse/credit all charges from August 17, 2008 to September 25, 2008 during which the original meter in dispute was registering an abnormally high KWH [sic] reading for a single person in the household at 16-1471 Road One, Hawaiian Acres, Kurtistown, Hawaii. This amounts are: [sic] \$216.66(August 13-Sept. 15, 08), (I paid \$100.00 good faith monies toward this bill at the time I filed my first grievance, to avoid loss of service), and \$137.00, (Sept. 15-Sept. 25, 2008.) The total I am requesting be reversed is \$253.66 and a CREDIT or reimbursement of \$100.00 paid as good faith monies while a grievance was [sic] addressed. The total of all considerations is \$353.66.
2. A full investigation of the practice of monopolizing testing equipment for HELCO's operating meters. This practice is not constitutional and crosses many fairness to consumer issues. The [commission] has allowed this to continue, unchecked.
3. An investigation into the reasons why it took HELCO 35 days to return test results for the meter in question.

Complaint, at 2 (emphasis in original). Complainant also appears to seek compensation for her expenses as follows:

The expense involved in filing a formal complaint, in the amount of \$30.00 filing fee, \$14.58 + \$.87 copy fees, Bank of Hawaii fee of \$5.00 for notary services, as well as any postal fees are requested to be reimbursed to me, by [HELCO], if the case is ruled in my favor.

Complaint, at 1.

Upon review, the Complaint appears to substantially comply with Hawaii Administrative Rules ("HAR") Title 6, Chapter 61, Subchapter 5 of the commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. Therefore, pursuant to HAR § 6-61-67(e), Respondents must file an answer to the Complaint within twenty (20) days after the date of service of this Order.

II.

Order

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

HELCO shall file an answer to the attached Complaint with the commission within twenty (20) days after the date of service of this order.

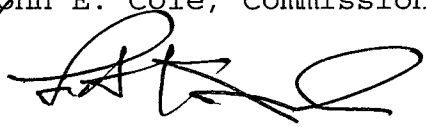
DONE at Honolulu, Hawaii FEB 10 2009.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

By 
Carlito P. Caliboso, Chairman

By 
John E. Cole, Commissioner

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


By
Leslie H. Kondo, Commissioner


Jodi K. Yi
Commission Counsel

2009-0004.cp

January 8, 2009

Public Utilities Commission
465 South King Street, Room 103
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Re: Plaintiff, Mari Christopher
Vs. Defendant: Hawaii Electric Light Company

To Whom It May Concern:

This cover letter is being submitted with my formal complaint to inform the Public Utilities Commission of the overall impact of this process. The practices of the Hawaii Electric Light Company and particularly in cases such as this, is to rely on their word against the word of the consumer. That they have been allowed to operate largely without oversight on meter issues, gives rise to numerous fair practices issues for the consumer. With the exposure of these issues and their implications, it is my intention to ask the Hawaii State Legislature to address and submit motions for review of public utilities practices.

The expense involved in filing a formal complaint, in the amount of \$30.00 filing fee, \$14.58 + \$.87 copy fees, Bank of Hawaii fee of \$5.00 for notary services, as well as any postal fees are requested to be reimbursed to me, by Hawaii Electric Light Company, if the case is ruled in my favor. The process by which this complaint is required to be filed is designed to be difficult and could be intimidating. Fortunately, I am not intimidated by legal documentation or reticent to respond in like format. For some consumers however, the process would discourage further action. This is being mentioned only for the purpose of the PUC being aware that my concerns will be included in my communication with the Hawaii State Legislature.

Be aware that I am an employee of the State of Hawaii, Department of Education as a full-time teacher at Kea'au High School. I have a clean history of paying my HELCO bill as long as I have been a customer, since June, 2004. My complaint originates from HELCO's refusal to admit that their meter readings at my residence have remained largely static regardless of the fact that only one person resides at my residence from August 17 to present. It appears that the KWH usage has been pro-rated regardless of actual usage. HELCO denies this, of course. Also, HELCO is the only entity that can calibrate their meter equipment. This again, raises several red flags of concern for fairness to consumer issues. Your expedient review of my complaint is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Mari Christopher
Mari Christopher

EXHIBIT A

FILED
2009 JAN -9 P 12:11
PUBLIC UTILITIES
COMMISSION

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII**

Ms. Mari Christopher
P.O. Box 392
Kurtistown, Hawaii 96760

Plaintiff

Vs.

Hawaii Electric Light Company
P.O. Box 1027
Hilo, Hawaii 96721-1027

Defendant

This formal complaint is made by Mari Christopher, against Hawaii Electric Light Company for:

1. Denial of adjustment to zero/reimburse/credit, of charges from August 17, 2008 to September 25, 2008. on HELCO account # 9700-3645-0188, 16-1471 Road One, Hawaiian Acres, #P30L.
2. Absence of neutral party calibration opportunities for HELCO operating equipment. There has not been fair representation for consumers for equipment failure evaluation.

The facts and circumstances surrounding this complaint are contained in the attached documentation to HELCO as well as the PUC in Hilo, Hawaii. Denial of my claim (dated December 8, 2008) is also attached, which includes HELCO's denial of any responsibility in this case. An informal complaint to the PUC of Hilo, Hawaii is included.

The relief desired is to have the Public Utilities Commission:

1. Order HELCO to adjust to zero, reimburse/credit all charges from August 17, 2008 to September 25, 2008 during which the original meter in dispute was registering an abnormally high KWH reading for a single person in the household at 16-1471 Road One, Hawaiian Acres, Kurtistown, Hawaii. This amounts are: **\$216.66**(August 13-Sept.15, 08), (I paid **\$100.00** good faith monies toward this bill at the time I filed my first grievance, to avoid loss of service), and **\$137.00**, (Sept. 15-Sept. 25, 2008.) The **total** I am requesting be reversed is **\$253.66** and a **CREDIT or reimbursement** of **\$100.00** paid as good faith monies while a grievance was addressed. The total of all considerations is **\$353.66**.
2. A full investigation of the practice of monopolizing testing equipment for HELCO's operating meters. This practice is not constitutional and crosses many fairness to consumer issues. The PUC has allowed this to continue, unchecked.
3. An investigation into the reasons why it took HELCO 35 days to return test results for the meter in question.

Helco's December 8, 2008 letter dismissing my claims, states in paragraph #3, "Helco has validated the accuracy of the reading and the registration of usage. Results of the meter tests show accuracy at levels allowed by the Public Utilities Commission. The meter #98818 was tested on October 28, 2008 and performed both types of tests accurately."

Helco raises questions of consumption variance. The consumption variance was that my household went from a three person household, down to a two person household, over a period of 1 year. Then on August 17, 2008, my youngest son left for college and my household became a single occupant household. However, the electric usage remained static with the two and three person household

I have questioned my electric bill with HELCO over the 4.5 years of living at this residence. They were never able to answer why my household was considerably higher in usage than many people I interviewed, with the same or larger households. They tried to convince me that we were not conserving.

Here are my habitual conservation practices which have been in place for the past 4 years.

When household was a 3, then 2 person household: **ALL RESIDENTS ARE ABSENT DURING THE WORK/SCHOOL DAYS.**

1. Hot water heater power source is only turned on 1 hour daily. Otherwise the breaker to this appliance is off (water heater is 2004 model)
2. Cold water usage in washing machine, strictly. Two washer loads a week
3. Refrigerator on the lowest possible setting, as well as freezer
4. Refrigerator replaced 2 years ago, in 2006, with more energy efficient model
5. Water pump replaced by efficient pump in 2004 upon moving into residence
6. Low, non heat setting for dish washer
7. light bulbs throughout, where applicable, replaced with low wattage fluorescent bulbs
8. Solar powered gate and outside lighting
9. No big screen television equipment, only one small 13" and one 26" TV set.
10. Two PUC's in use in the household prior to single occupant status.
11. No Jacuzzi, outside pool equipment, air conditioning, dehumidifiers, stereo equipment

After the household became a single occupant status:

. In addition to numbers 1-11, the following applies: (I AM ABSENT DURING THE DAY, WHEN I AM AT WORK. THERE IS NOTHING EXCEPT THE REFRIGERATOR AND ONE CLOCK THAT IS RUNNING. PUC AND TV ARE ON POWER STRIP THAT IS TURNED OFF WHEN I LEAVE THE HOUSE)

1. One PUC in use
2. One 26" TV in use
3. One shower daily
4. One washer load per week
5. All rooms not in use.(3 bedrooms) completely devoid of electrical devices(all lamps, one TV, satellite receiver, clocks unplugged)
6. One dishwasher load per month
7. Overall conservation of water, power observed.

Page 3.

Since the installation of the new meter on September 25, 2008, I have averaged 9 KWH or 9.1 KWH daily. This is in harsh contrast to the 14-21 KWH daily usage alleged by HELCO. HELCO's readings, through the meter in dispute, reflect very nearly the same usage for a 3, then 2 occupant household as a single person household. This is bogus and inaccurate. If the old meter was reading correctly, why does the new meter read considerably less daily KWH usage?

HELCO's reluctance to admit to faulty meter readings is due to the question that admission of overcharging raises of possible faulty/disputable meter readings through the meter in question, for the past 4 years.

I submit to the PUC and the Department of Consumer Affairs that the practices of monopolies such as HELCO is not consistent with a democratic form of government and consumer protection. HELCO should be required to provide consumers with meters that can be independently tested by various State approved electrical contractors/companies. For HELCO to provide meters that can only be tested by extremely expensive calibration equipment that no independent electrical contractor/company can afford, raises huge red flags of HELCO possibly trying to defraud the consumers of Hawaii.

Your prompt attention to this exceptionally unjust situation will be appreciated.

Respectfully,

Mari Christopher 12/30/08

Mari Christopher

Enclosures: as stated above

STATE OF HAWAII

COUNTY OF HAWAII

On this 7th day of January, ^{2009 up d} 2008, before me personally appeared Mari Christopher known to me to be the person described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and who acknowledged that she executed the same as her free act and deed.

L. Kinoshita

Notary Public

My commission expires: 11-1-09

LS

NOTARY PUBLIC CERTIFICATION

L Kinoshita

Third Circuit

Doc. Description: Before The Public

Utilities Commission of the

State of Hawaii

No. of Pages: 4 Date of Doc 12-8-08

L. Kinoshita

Notary Signature

1-7-09

Date

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII**

In the Application of

Docket No. _____

Ms. Mari Christopher

Vs.

Hawaii Electric Light Company
P.O. Box 1027
Hilo, Hawaii 96721-1027

For reimbursement for losses and adjustment to zero, charges in question

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on January 8, 2009, I served 2 copies of the above complaint by United States Postal Service to the following, at the following address:

Division of Consumer Advocacy
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs
P.O. Box 541
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Dated : Hilo, Hawaii, 1/9/09
Mari Christopher
Mari Christopher

December 30, 2008

State of Hawaii
Public Utilities Commission
Department of Budget and Finance
465 S/ Lomg Street. #103
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Attn: John Leite

Re: Informal Complaint #IC-2008-0188

Dear Mr. Leite,

Your response to my complaint is appreciated. I do feel that the informal complaint process serves no real purpose and I would have preferred to go directly to a formal complaint. This process may have been offered to me when I first contacted you. If it was, in hind-sight, it would have expedited my grievance. I am now constructing that document per your example.

David Kurohara's response was predictable, stating that HELCO plays no part in the meter accuracy issue and that their test results showed fully legal performance variances. Any intelligent person would question this monopoly on calibrations. I find the whole response a "copy and paste" version they send to any concerned consumer. It does not address the 35 day delay in testing the equipment nor does it speak to the variables that were not considered before removing the meter. It was simply replaced in a possible effort to cover up any malfunctions.

Thank you for your help thus far. It appears that it will be in the hands of the PUC in Honolulu as well as the Division of Consumer Advocacy, Department of Consumer Affairs. I am still not certain what function your office plays in these issues, except to offer the consumer an informal complaint form, which as shown by this case, is treated as nothing much more than an annoyance, by the company in question.

Happy New Year to you and yours.

Respectfully,

Mari Christopher
Mari Christopher

Cc: PUC, Honolulu, Hawaii
Division of Consumer Advocacy
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

December 30, 2008

Hawaii Electric Light Company
P.O. Box 1027
Hilo, Hawaii 96721-1027

Re: Account #9700-3645-008
Informal Complaint #IC-2008-0188

Attn: David Kurohara

Dear Mr. Kurohara,

Your reponse letter dated December 8, 2008, restating the test results of meter #98818 SN#6954583 served no effective purpose. You state in paragraph #3 that "HELCO has validated the accuracy of the reading and the registration of usage. Results of the meter tests show accuracy at levels allowed by the Public Utilities Commission." You realize how placatory that sounds and with all due respect, 35 days to have this meter tested by the agency/company who is being disputed, has zero plausibility. HELCO being the sole entity that can test their own equipment, their haste to remove the meter in question and replace it without further dialogue or investigation raises numerous red flags to the consumer.

You may have thought that this issue was closed and I would just take my grievance and go away. Nothing could be further from the truth. The informal complaint filed with the local PUC was just a formality required by the consumer, which may discourage further motions, in some circumstances. However, a formal complaint, which is the logical outcome of this unresolved issue, is being filed with the PUC of the State of Hawaii as well as the Division of Consumer Advocacy, Department of Consumer Affairs.

It is my belief that HELCO does not operate in the best interest of the consumer, but rather in their own profit-based interest. If a consumer does not have options on calibration issues of meter accuracy, the possibility of fraud and corruption becomes highly suspect.

Sincerely,

Mari Christopher
Mari Christopher

Cc: Public Utilities Commission
Division of Consumer Advocacy
Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Received 11/14/08

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
~~KEKUAHAGA BUILDING~~
~~465 SOUTH KING STREET, #103~~
~~HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813~~

688 KIMMOLE ST, #106A
HILDA, HI 96720
FAX: 974-4534

INFORMAL COMPLAINT

(Please print in ink or type.)

(A) Complainant:

MARI CHRISTOPHER

Name

N/A

Name of company, if any

16-1471 Road one (Uhin Ana)

Address

Hawaiian Acres

Kurtistown

City

Hi

State

96760

Zip Code

808 968-7170

Telephone No. (Residence)

N/A

(Business)

(B)

Complaint Against:

HELCO

Name of Company

P.O. Box 909

Address

Honolulu

City

Hi 96808

State Zip Code

local, Hawaii Island

Telephone No.

969-6999

Account No. (if applicable)

9700-3645-008

(C) Statement of Problem (attach copies of all documents--bills, letters, notes, etc.):

(Describe the events in the order in which they have occurred. Use additional sheets as necessary and attach to this form.)

Prior history (invoices) see attached.

see attached summary of events and supportive grievance.

(D) STATEMENT OF REMEDIAL ACTION DESIRED:

action desired is for Helco to adjust ⁹¹267.38 from my balance. The travesty of not being able to have an independent calibration of equipment by which Helco charges a customer is a violation of basic fair practices policies. If justice were served, the whole 14 years of overpaying Helco because of a bad meter would be investigated and prosecuted.

(E) DISCUSSION OF INFORMAL COMPLAINT WITH THE COMPANY:

1. Date(s) of Discussion: 11/
2. Name of Company Representative: Dave Kurahara
3. Phone No.: 969-0139

meter shop - Dave - 969-0329

Mari Christy
Signature

11/14/08
Date

November 16, 2008

Public Utilities Commission
688 Kinoole St. #106A
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Re: Complaint: Helco practices
Meter # 98818 SN#6954583 #HX00098818
Account # 9700-3645-008
Attn: John

As per our phone conversation last week, I am responding to your request for a complaint form and supporting documents.

You will find attached, 6+ months of electric bills generated by Helco for my home at 16-1471 Uhini Ana Rd., Kurtistown. My two children and I have lived at this property beginning on August 13, 2004. From the beginning, our electric bill was what I considered very high and It seemed that no matter how we tried to conserve, the bill remained higher than it should. I questioned Helco on several occasions about this issue. The first time I called Helco was early in 2005. and I asked how the meter was read. I had never seen any Helco truck/meter reader come down our road to read meters. The customer service representative on the phone clearly did not know how our meter was read and said it was probably read with binoculars from the street. I told her that was impossible due to the distance of the house from the street, the locked gate at the entrance and the location of the meter on the side of the house facing away from the street. She left the line and came back with the news that it was read electronically. I asked her to send me a schedule of dates and times that the meter would be read electronically. It arrived in my mail a week later. The copy of this schedule was illegible and smeared. It was totally unreadable. I then called Helco and requested another copy. I never received another copy.

At this time I began graduate school, had one child in college and another in High School. I had little time to be hassling with Helco about the bill and let the issue rest. When we took a trip to the mainland in December, 2007, from December 26 to January 5, 2008 (10 days) the house was vacant. I had unplugged all appliances except for the water heater and the refrigerator. Nobody was in the house the entire 10 days. Our bill for the period 12/13/07 to 1/15/08 was \$258.86, showing 716 Kwh of usage. This was a 33 day billing cycle, **23 of which we were using electricity**. The bill prior to that where we were at home for the entire 29 day billing cycle (11/14/07-12/13/07) was \$206.20, showing a usage of 593 Kwh. This made no sense to me and I called Helco on this issue. The answer I received, without any options for filing a complaint, was that the fuel charges had risen and Helco had to pass that on to the customer. I explained that the meter showed that we used some 200 more Kwh in the cycle in which we were gone for 10 days. I got no call back when I asked for a supervisor to call me back.

In July, 2006 I began teaching full time. My daughter moved out of the house to live closer to UHH and it was just myself and my son in the house. The electric usage showed no difference in Kwh usage and the bills remained on an average of \$220.00-\$270.00 a month. The lowest bill we ever had was \$176.73 from 8/15/07 to 9/13/07. This made no sense because my son was home for the summer, running his computer, opening and closing the refrigerator, watching TV, having his friends over and using more, not less electricity than the surrounding months when we were both at school all day. This meter has been reading erratic amounts, some higher and this one lower reading, ~~with~~ ^{which} never corresponds to the activity in the home.

My most recent grievance was placed with Dave Kurahara at Helco, in September, 2008. My son had moved out of the house on August 17, in the AM, to move into the dorms at UHH. That left just me in the house from August 17 to present.

My bill for the period August 13-September 15 was \$216.66. This showed KWH usage of 474. I realize that fuel costs have been high, but this was unexplainably high for one person's usage. I had a friend who is an electrician look at the wiring on my house to see if that may be the culprit. The electrician, who was visiting from the mainland, said it all looked fine and said it may be either meter tampering or a faulty transmission from the meter.

When I spoke with Mr. Kurahara, I was told that the transmission lines that feed information to Helco NEVER fail. and that could be ruled out. "Never fail" were his exact words when I questioned him a second time. I asked if Helco could check for tampering/stealing electricity and send someone out for that purpose. He said they would send someone out and that the technician would call to let me know when. I had explained the whole scenario and my concerns to Mr. Kurahara and he had a "reason" for all the information I have shared with you, above. To Mr. Kurahara, the usage issue was mute, and I was just using that much power. I explained that it made no sense since I do one load of laundry weekly, one dryer load weekly, run the dish washer once every two weeks, using the energy saving mode and no heat dry, turn on my water heater for one hour only a day (it is off 23 hours a day), have a 27 inch TV, one computer, a two year old refrigerator, wash clothes in cold water, bathe once a day, use microwave cooking almost exclusively, do not use stove top or oven cooking, have no fans, AC, big screen TV, have unplugged all appliances of any kind in the other 3 bedrooms, replaced my light bulbs with energy saver bulbs, do not have outdoor lighting that stays on at night, no security system, and again, AM GONE ALL DAY AT WORK.

A technician called me the next day and said he was on my road and wanted to get into my gate to replace my meter. I was puzzled that he was just going to replace the meter without investigating anything about it or the house or tampering. I agreed to have him enter the property while I was at work and told him how to get in. When I got home that day,

Sept. 25 there was a new, digital/electronic meter in the place of the old meter. I began that very day taking down the usage numbers on the meter, several times a day, when I was home. I was averaging no more than 9 Kwh per day for the following 35 days. The old meter was reporting an average of 14.4 with highs of 17 Kwh according to Dave at Helco, who read me a day by day reading. He also sent me a copy of this reading up to 9/23/08. There were many gaps in the reading as he said sometimes there is a time when Helco does not get a reading for a period of 1-3 days or in that general time frame. I am not clear as to the reason for this, but he tried to explain it.

I called Helco around the 6th of October to see if the meter they removed had been tested. Dave told me it had and he would get back to me on the results, since he did not have them handy. Later he left me a message on my answering machine that the meter had tested within the legal variance of 98% accurate. I called him back about 4 days later and told him that I was requesting to have an independent calibration done on that meter. He said he was not sure about the results(after telling me that it had tested 98% accurate) and would get back to me on the results. I questioned him about what he had told me earlier and he said he thought it had been tested but may have been mistaken. It took 33 days for me to get an answer from Helco on that meter! I called several times and left messages for Dave to call back, but did not receive any response. Finally, after 33 days, I got Mr. Kurahara on the phone and he said the meter had tested 98% accurate on a full load and 100% on a light load. This was within legal parameters. I then told him I was going for an independent test and his words to me were, "Oh, I thought you would be satisfied with the test results." I said I was not satisfied and proceeded to find an independent electrical contractor to test my meter. After calling some 5 electricians, some of which never returned my messages, I learned that the calibration equipment is far too expensive for any independent electrician to have and nobody but Helco can test Helco's equipment! I called Dave back and left him a message that I would have

appreciated him telling me the truth about the meter testing issue and that nobody but Helco can test Helco's equipment. This was upsetting and is very suspect of fraud. I feel HELCO attempts to defraud the public through exclusive control over their equipment and the accuracy issues of their equipment. Nobody can second guess Helco, and Helco has a monopoly on meters, calibration of same and pricing.

Even if my old meter had something wrong with it, the Helco technicians can fix it so it tests perfect. This is a blatant misuse of power by Helco.

I spoke with Dave (another Dave) who runs the meter shop for Helco. He was very nice and I told him my concerns. He reiterated that the meter had tested out fine and that I would never have found someone to calibrate the meter on this Island, anyway. He had never heard of anyone being able to get a calibration done outside of Helco. How convenient for Helco.

My bill of \$216.66 is not one that I feel I must pay the balance on. I paid \$100.00 on this bill and will not pay any more until this issue is brought before the PUC and I am found to be wrong. The subsequent bill from 9/15 to 9/25 when the new meter was installed, I am also not paying. It is for // \$150.00 I feel I should not pay any charges generated by the old meter until this is resolved. I have paid the \$149..55 charge from the reading taken by the new meter which shows an average Kwh of 9.1 per day. This new meter is reading approximately half of what the old meter was reading for just one person in the house, on average. I therefore conclude that the old meter was overcharging me and registering more energy than I was actually using. I am quiet convinced that the old meter was somehow prorating the household usage as it read very close to the same "high" numbers no matter whether we were home or not, using more power or not. This pro-rating has never been in the favor of the consumer, but always in the favor of Helco.

What am I asking the PUC to do? I am asking for two basic things:

1. That the practice by Helco to have access to the only calibration equipment be stopped. This is an unconstitutional and unfair practice. I am very surprised that nobody has called Helco on this prior or that the PUC has not overseen this issue and put a stop to it.
2. That the \$267.38 amount Helco says I owe be adjusted off my bill. The charges are not a fair representation of the power usage by one person, given the way I live and the energy conservation efforts I make daily.

Further, if the PUC, Helco, or any other agency wants to review the way I use electricity, I am open to a full evaluation of my residence by them. I defy the claims of Helco that I used 611 Kwh as a single person over the course of 39 days, from 8/17 to 9/25. That is a claim I will continue to dispute.

Be confident that I will continue to dispute Helco's claim and continue to investigate why Helco is the only agency that can call the shots on their equipment. This is an open door for fraud and again, it is a mystery why it has been allowed to continue. I am contacting the State of Hawaii House of Representatives and the Senate to ask for a bill to be introduced to stop this kind of blatant public utility abuse.

Sincerely and resolutely,



Mari Christopher

Cc: State of Hawaii House of Representatives

State of Hawaii Senate

Office of the Governor, State of Hawaii

Office of the Mayor of Hawaii Island, Billy Kenoi



Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc.
PO Box 1027
Hilo, HI 96721-1027

October is Energy Awareness Month
Live Energy Life!
Log on to www.helcohi.com for tips.

ACCOUNT NUMBER

SERVICE ADDRESS

PAGE 2 OF 2

9700-3645-008

MARI A CHRISTOPHER

161471 HAWN ACRES RD 1 #P30L

SEE PAGE 1

R RESIDENTIAL SERVICE
FROM 09/25/08 TO 10/15/08 20 DAYS

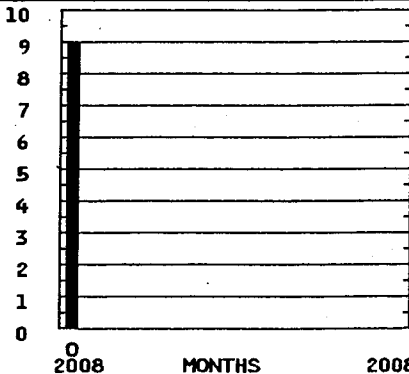
MTR# HX000125773 KILOWATT HOURS
CURRENT READING 00182
PREVIOUS READING 00000
DIFFERENCE 182
MULTIPLIER 1
USAGE 182
+ 91
273
147
128.31

B
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CUSTOMER CHARGE \$10.00
NON-FUEL ENERGY 36.76
BASE FUEL ENERGY 24.29
INTERIM RATE ADJUSTMENT 7.67
ENERGY COST ADJUSTMENT 68.99
IRP COST RECOVERY 1.84
TOTAL FOR SERVICE \$149.55

paid

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ELECTRIC USAGE PROFILE

DATE	KWH	AMOUNT	DAYS	KWH/DAY	\$/DAY
10/15/08	182	\$149.55	20	9.1	

per kWh

101608 06085 H2 I



Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc.
PO Box 1027
Hilo, HI 96721-1027

Turn up the thermostat a few degrees to
SAVE energy and \$\$ on air conditioning.
Check www.heco.com for more tips.

ACCOUNT NUMBER

SERVICE ADDRESS

9700-3645-008

MARI A CHRISTOPHER

HAWN ACRES RD 1 #2561 P30L

09/09/08	BALANCE FROM PREVIOUS BILLING	\$225.78
	PAYMENT - THANK YOU	<u>225.78-</u>
	BALANCE PRIOR TO BILLING	\$0.00
	CURRENT ELECTRIC SERVICE DUE 10/06/08	<u>216.66</u>
	TOTAL AMOUNT DUE	\$216.66

28 day @ 9.1 kW/hr = 254.8 x 45.7 = 116.44
5 day @ = 14.4 x 45.7 = 72 x 45.7 = 32.98
= 149.34
67.327
diff

should be

~~112.90~~

x45.7
158.77

bill should be 142.15 for 30 day max

R RESIDENTIAL SERVICE
FROM 08/13/08 TO 09/15/08 33 DAYS

MTR# HX000098818	KILOWATT HOURS
CURRENT READING	42624
PREVIOUS READING	<u>42150</u>
DIFFERENCE	474
MULTIPLIER	<u>1</u>
USAGE	474

from 8/17 - present
1 person in house
pd. 100.00 good faith 10/8/08

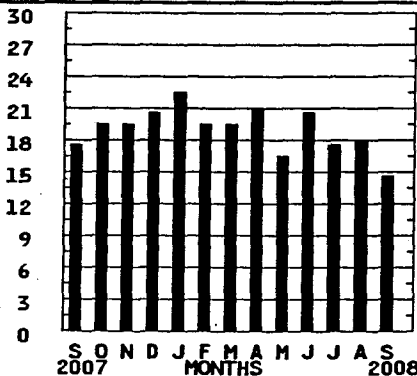
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CUSTOMER CHARGE	\$10.00
NON-FUEL ENERGY	54.62
BASE FUEL ENERGY	36.09
INTERIM RATE ADJUSTMENT	10.88
ENERGY COST ADJUSTMENT	102.33
IRP COST RECOVERY	<u>2.74</u>
TOTAL FOR SERVICE	\$216.66

pd. 100.00

charging bet 34
35-45¢

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ELECTRIC USAGE PROFILE FOR METER HX00098818

DATE	KWH	AMOUNT	DAYS	KWH/DAY	\$/DAY
09/15/08	474	45.7 \$216.66	33	14.4	6.57
08/13/08	519	43 225.78	29	17.9	7.79
07/15/08	540	42 227.09	31	17.4	7.33
06/14/08	627	40 249.68	30	20.2	8.05
05/14/08	492	39 191.34	30	16.4	6.38
04/14/08	640	36 244.92	30	20.6	7.90
03/14/08	567	34 222.14	30	18.9	7.40
02/13/08	561	33 219.06	29	19.3	7.55
01/15/08	716	36 258.86	29	21.7	7.84
12/13/07	593	35 206.20	29	20.4	7.11
11/14/07	580	35 204.70	30	19.3	6.82
10/15/07	617	35 216.98	30	19.3	6.78
09/13/07	505	34 176.73	29	17.4	6.09

EN PAYING IN PERSON, PLEASE PRESENT BOTH PORTIONS

004019852 091708 06085 H2

1 person in house
from 8/17 forward



Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc.
PO Box 1027
Hilo, HI 96721-1027

October is Energy Awareness Month
Live Energy Lite!
Log on to www.helcohi.com for tips.

ACCOUNT NUMBER

SERVICE ADDRESS

PAGE 1 OF 2

9700-3645-008

MARI A CHRISTOPHER

161471 HAWN ACRES RD 1 #P30L

10/10/08	BALANCE FROM PREVIOUS BILLING		\$216.66
	PAYMENT - THANK YOU		<u>100.00-</u>
	OVERDUE BALANCE PRIOR TO BILLING <u>DUE NOW</u>		\$116.66
	LATE PAYMENT CHARGE	1.17	
	CURRENT ELECTRIC SERVICE	149.55	
	CURRENT CHARGES DUE 11/04/08		<u>150.72</u>
	TOTAL AMOUNT DUE		\$267.38

R RESIDENTIAL SERVICE
FROM 09/15/08 TO 09/25/08 10 DAYS

MTR# HX000098818 KILOWATT HOURS
CURRENT READING 42761
PREVIOUS READING 42624
DIFFERENCE 137
MULTIPLIER 1
USAGE 137

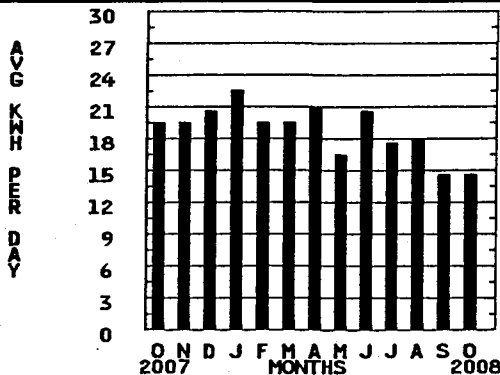
*should be
91 X*

METER EXCHANGE - SEE FOLLOWING PAGE

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*old meter 1 day
4.6/kwh than
different meter*

*1 person
in house*



ELECTRIC USAGE PROFILE						
DATE	KWH	AMOUNT	DAYS	KWH/DAY	\$ / DAY	
09/25/08	137		10	13.7		
09/15/08	474	216.66	33	14.4	6.57	
08/13/08	519	225.78	29	17.9	7.79	
07/15/08	540	227.09	31	17.4	7.33	
06/14/08	627	249.68	31	20.2	8.05	
05/14/08	492	191.34	30	16.4	6.38	
04/14/08	640	244.92	31	20.6	7.90	
03/14/08	567	222.14	30	18.9	7.40	
02/13/08	561	219.06	29	19.3	7.55	
01/15/08	716	258.86	33	21.7	7.84	
12/13/07	593	206.20	29	20.4	7.11	
11/14/07	580	204.70	30	19.3	6.82	
10/15/07	617	216.98	32	19.3	6.78	

IF PAYING IN PERSON, PLEASE PRESENT BOTH PORTIONS

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN THIS PORTION WITH YOUR PAYMENT

101608 06085 H2 I



Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc.
PO Box 1027
Hilo, HI 96721-1027
Telephone (Hilo 969-6999)
(Kona 329-3584)(Waimea 885-4605)

ACCOUNT NUMBER

9700-3645-008

DATE DUE

PLEASE SEE ABOVE

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

\$267.38

AMOUNT ENCLOSED

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS
PAYABLE TO:

HELCO
PO Box 909
Honolulu, HI 96808-0909

|||||
MARI A CHRISTOPHER
P O BOX 392
KURTISTOWN HI 96760-0392

31 970036450082 00000015072 00000026738



December 8, 2008

Ms. Mari Christopher
P. O. Box 392
Kurtistown, HI 96760

Account #9700-3645-008
161471 Hawaiian Acres Rd 1 #P30L

Informal Complaint No. IC-2008-0188

Dear Ms. Christopher,

In response to your letter dated November 20, 2008, Hawaii Electric Light Company (HELCO) has credited your account for both late payment fees charges on October 23, 2008 for \$1.17 and on November 18, 2008 for \$2.65. These credits remove both late fees previously applied to your account.

The current account balance is \$116.66 following a payment received of \$133.33 on November 26, 2008.

HELCO has validated the accuracy of the reading and the registration of usage. Results of the meter tests show accuracy at levels allowed by the Public Utilities Commission. The meter #98818 was tested on October 28, 2008 and performed both types of tests accurately. On full load or "FF" the meter recorded at 100.04% accurate and 98.85% accurate on light load or "LL". Light load is approximately 10% of full load.

It may be difficult for HELCO to prove or provide answers to the consumption variance however results of the meter test, in this particular case, have been deemed conclusive. Based on the evidence and test results of the original meter, it does not appear that HELCO is at fault.

To address your concern regarding the test results, you are welcomed to observe HELCO personnel test this meter at our test facility, using our meter test equipment. As advised in our conversations, it is difficult to locate equivalent testing equipment in the marketplace due to its cost and feasibility. In addition, we are willing make our meter #98818 available to a third party through to the Public Utility Commission. Please notify us if are interested.



Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 969-0139. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

David Kurohara
Supervisor, Customer Services Department

Cc: Mr. John Leite – Hawaii PUC

Cc: Mr. Paul Fujioka – HELCO Manager, Customer Service Department

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



CARLITO P. CALIBOSO
CHAIRMAN

JOHN E. COLE
COMMISSIONER

LESLIE H. KONDO
COMMISSIONER

STATE OF HAWAII
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
485 S. KING STREET, #103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Telephone: (808) 586-2020
Facsimile: (808) 586-2066

e-mail: Hawaii.PUC@hawaii.gov

December 4, 2008

David Kurohara
Supervisor, Customer Services Department
Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc.
1200 Kilauea Avenue
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Dear Mr. Kurohara:

Subject: Complaint filed by Mari Christopher
Informal Complaint No. IC-2008-0188

Enclosed is a copy of a complaint by Mari Christopher against Hawaii Electric Light Co., Inc. (HELCO). Ms. Christopher alleges that prior to September 25, 2008, when her current meter was installed, the replaced meter gave readings which she felt were inaccurate. Her household was reduced to only one member on August 17, 2008, yet the consumption of electricity did not go down. Only after the installation of the current meter did Ms. Christopher feel was an accurate reading of her consumption; hence, the dispute on her two past due billing amounts.

To assist the Commission in the investigation of this complaint, we would appreciate your review of this matter and a response that addresses Ms. Christopher's allegations and concerns.

Thank you for your assistance.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Leite".

John Leite
District Representative – Hawaii
688 Kinoole Street, #106A
Hilo, Hawaii

Enclosure
c: Mari Christopher

OfficeMax

OfficeMax #767
311 MAKALA STREET
HILO, HI 96720
(808) 969-9595

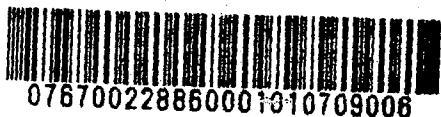
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SS B&W LTR SS 20#Wht
Contract Price
21 @ \$0.04

SubTotal \$0.84
TAX 4.166% \$0.03
TOTAL \$0.87
Cash \$1.00
Change \$0.13

Retail Connect

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Find your inner elf at ElfYourself.com!
ORDER BY PHONE 1-877-OFFICEMAX



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OfficeMax

OfficeMax #767
311 MAKALA STREET
HILO, HI 96720
(808) 969-9595

998100000689 \$14.00 *
SS B&W LTR SS 24#Lsr/Clr
Contract Price
200 @ \$0.07

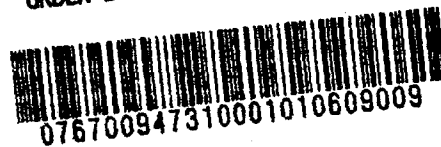
SubTotal \$14.00
TAX 4.166% \$0.58
TOTAL \$14.58

Debit \$14.58
Card number: XXXXXXXXXXXX4191
Authorization

Retail Connect

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Find your inner elf at ElfYourself.com!
ORDER BY PHONE 1-877-OFFICEMAX



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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The foregoing order was served on the date of filing by mail, postage prepaid, and properly addressed to the following parties:

CATHERINE P. AWAKUNI (2 COPIES)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF CONSUMER ADVOCACY
P. O. Box 541
Honolulu, HI 96809

DEAN MATSUURA
MANAGER, REGULATORY AFFAIRS
HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC.
P.O. Box 2750
Honolulu, HI 96840-0001

JAY IGNACIO
PRESIDENT
HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC.
P.O. Box 1027
Hilo, HI 96721-1027

MARI CHRISTOPHER
P.O. Box 392
Kurtistown, HI 96760